

Šimaški and Central Western Iran: The Archaeological Evidence*

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1. Introduction

Šimaški was an important element in Elamite history for approximately a millennium. Despite this, its development and history, even its location, remain obscure. Investigation of these subjects, by using the limited textual sources alone, has essentially reached an impasse. The purpose of this paper is to examine the archaeological data from central western Iran (Luristan) as new evidence for the study of these problems. This evidence suggests that during the second half of the third millennium, the intermontane valleys of central western Iran gradually coalesced culturally. I will argue that this phenomenon has a political dimension as well, and that a regional state emerged in early second millennium Luristan as part of the Elamite confederation. The most probable identification of this state is Šimaški.

The name 'Šimaški' occur in texts dating from the late Akkadian through Old Babylonian periods, with references most frequent in Ur III (2112–2004 B.C.) documents in Mesopotamia and in

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Elamite texts of the *sukkalmah* period (1900–1600 B.C.) at Susa. The name referred to a political and geographical entity, rather than a specific settlement. At the end of the third millennium, Šimaški participated in the destruction of the Ur III state and went on to become an important component of Elam during the *sukkalmah* period. The importance of Šimaški is evident in the titulary of the members of the ruling triumvirate during the period where the ‘sukkal of Elam and Šimaški’ is second only to the *sukkalmah*.¹

Before presenting the archaeological evidence, an overview of the regional topography of central western Iran and the quality of the available historical and archaeological data is necessary. This is followed by a detailed discussion of the archaeological evidence, and finally by conclusions.

1.1 *Topography of Central Western Iran* (Figure 1)²

The key topographic characteristic of central western Iran is the successive ridges of the Zagros mountains, running southeast to northwest and isolating intermontane valleys from one another. Four ridges are particularly important. The westernmost, the Kabir Kūh, separates the Mesopotamian lowlands and the piedmont zone (the Pušt-i Kūh) from the highland valleys of western Luristan (the Piš-i Kūh). The Kūh-i Sefid, a part of the ‘chaîne magistrale’, runs through the center of Luristan and separates the western and eastern Piš-i Kūh. It is a major barrier to east-west communication. Further to the east, the Kūh-i Garin is a lesser but significant barrier, forming the eastern boundary of the Piš-i Kūh. The Alvand range, east of the Kangāvar and Nehāvand valleys, forms the eastern limit of Luristan, beyond which lies the Hamadān plain.

Because of the mountainous topography, there are few good routes through the central Zagros region. Movement from one valley to another perpendicular to the line of the ridges is possible

¹ M. Stolper ZA 72 (1982) 54–56; W. Hinz CAH 2 (1) (1973) 256–261.

² This description was compiled from the following sources: H. C. Rawlinson, *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society* 9, 26–116; Goff, *Luristan* 15–51 and *Iran* 9 (1971) 131–133; T. C. Young, Jr., *JNES* 25 (1966) 229–230; L. D. Levine, *Iran* 11 (1973) 1–7 and *Iran* 12 (1974) 99–104; E. Henrickson, *Ceramic Styles and Cultural Interaction in the Early and Middle Chalcolithic of the Central Zagros* (Doctoral Thesis, University of Toronto, 1983) 33–39.

only through a limited number of passes. The Great Khorasān Road ('High Road') is the best east-west route from the Iranian Plateau to the Mesopotamian lowlands. From the Hamadān plain it passes through the Kangāvar valley close to Gōdīn Tepe, then the Şaḥneh, Māhidašt, and Šāhābād valleys, and finally descends through the Zagros Gates into the middle reaches of the Diyala River. Once in the lowlands, the road to northern Babylonia is relatively easy. This route through the mountains defines the northern edge of Luristan.

A few routes connect Luristan (and the Great Khorasān Road) to the Elamite lowlands of Khūzistān, particularly Susiana.³ These run southeast/northwest, parallel to the mountain ridges. There is a good route on either side of the Kūh-i Garin, and a third, poorer route in western Luristan.

1.2 *Historical Sources*

Because Stolper has recently discussed the documentary evidence for the location and history of Šīmaški in this journal,⁴ I will summarize his conclusions here. Judging from historical data, Šīmaški must lie in the highlands, somewhere north of Susiana and/or Fars. Luristan, particularly the eastern portion, is frequently suggested as the probable location of Šīmaški. During the Ur III period a number of (semi-)autonomous polities formed a network of alliances to resist Ur III military and political pressure. This led to the formation of a loosely confederated state, which then became an important component of Elam under the *sukkal-mah*.

³ The first leads northward from Khūzistān along the Diz River through the Burūjird and Malāyer valleys, reaching the High Road at Hamadān. At the northern end of the Burūjird Valley, a branch road goes northwest through the Nehāvand and Kangāvar Valleys to the High Road, again near Gōdīn Tepe. From the southern end of the Burūjird valley a difficult route leads westward over a high pass to Khorrāmābād, and a good route leads southeastward to Isfahan. The second major route heads northward through Susiana along the Karkheh River, then northeast up the Kašgān River to Khorrāmābād where it turns northwest. It then passes through the Alištār, Mirbeg, Khāwa/Kakawand, and Harsin regions, joining the High Road at Bisitūn east of Kermānšāh. The third route follows the Saimarreh from the Karkheh River northward through the Tarhān and Hulailān valleys to join the High Road in the Šāhābād valley. A branch route follows the Saimarreh through Hulailān to the Kūh-i Sefid, and then runs northwest along the southwestern face of this ridge to the Māhidašt.

⁴ Stolper, ZA 72, 42–67.

2. Archaeological Data from Central Western Iran

2.1 *General Remarks*

Until recently, the archaeological data from central western Iran were insufficient to exercise tight chronological control over cultural developments. The long sequence of ceramics from Gōdīn Tepe in the Kangāvar valley (see Figure 1, site 1) during the Gōdīn III period (2600–1500 B.C.) has changed this. It is now possible to use the Gōdīn III ceramic sequence to organize the archaeological data from Luristan and thereby provide a regional perspective on socio-political development in the highlands. Four distinct ceramic phases cover the period between 2600–1600 B.C.

Gōdīn III: 2 1900–1600 B.C.

Gōdīn III: 4 2100–1900 B.C.⁵

Gōdīn III: 5 2300–2100 B.C.

Gōdīn III: 6 2600–2300 B.C.

Unfortunately, while the Gōdīn sequence affords good chronological control, the extent of archaeological documentation from other valleys in Luristan varies widely in quality. Excavations and soundings are few in number and of limited size. Surveys of varying intensities have covered much of the region, but the documentation is often limited so that in some cases the regional distribution is based on few sherds from fewer sites.⁶ For the present, the distributions are based primarily on analysis of the painted decoration of Gōdīn III pottery for two reasons. Little but painted pottery has generally been published or even preserved in reference collections, and most vessel shapes and wares in the assemblage are either long-lived, undiagnostic, or both. Elements of the style of the painted decoration, however, are distinctive and do permit fine-grained chronological distinctions.⁷

The regional distribution of Gōdīn III pottery during each phase is presented in Tables 1–5 and Figures 1–4. The documented patterns of distribution should be treated cautiously, however,

⁵ Gōdīn III: 3 is an ephemeral phase, defined only at Gōdīn Tepe, and has little archaeological or historical significance. The interval between the Gōdīn III: 4 and Gōdīn III: 2 occupations at Gōdīn Tepe must have been relatively short (Henrickson, *Godin III* Chapter 5.5).

⁶ Henrickson, *Godin III*, Chapter 9 and Tables 17–42.

⁷ Henrickson, *op. cit.* Chapters 6.3–4 and 7.

because the quality of the data varies.⁸ Simply counting the numbers of documented sites yields frequencies which are more an artifact of the history of survey and excavation than a reflection of the ancient situation (see Tables 1–5, especially Table 5). Thus reliance on quantification could be misleading. For some valleys so few data are available that even establishing the presence of a phase can be problematic. In Tables 1–5, excavations and surveys are distinguished because the former sometimes reveal phases missing from surface survey collections. Raw counts are given in Tables 1–5, but I will concentrate on general patterns and avoid arguments which rely heavily on frequency of sites.⁹

Finally, the relationships between pottery distributions and other cultural phenomena are complex. Nonetheless, changing patterns of pottery distribution and a relative increase or decrease in the uniformity of style should reflect evolving patterns of interaction. Three studies illustrate the variety of possible interpretations. Kramer concluded that the distribution of 'Hābūr ware' in the early second millennium B.C. was related to the area under the hegemony or influence of the Old Assyrian state. Nicol concluded that 'White on Black' ware of the third quarter of the second millennium B.C. was not associated exclusively with Hurrians as had been assumed but instead reflected socio-political processes. E. Henrickson, in a study of Chalcolithic (4th millennium B.C.) pottery from Luristan, concluded that the sparse but widespread distribution of a distinctive type of pottery suggests the presence of

⁸ Although Gödin Tepe provides a detailed sequence, survey data available for Gödin III in the Kangāvar valley do not allow detailed analysis of settlement pattern development (cf. T. C. Young, *Proceedings of the Third Annual Symposium on Archaeological Research in Iran* [Tehran, 1975] 23–30). But most valleys and regions have received far less attention. Publication also plays a role. For example, Goff surveyed both the eastern and western Piš-i Kūh with roughly equivalent intensity, but she illustrated far more from the east (Luristan: Pl. 95–102, 106 [39 sites]) than the west (*ibid.*: Pl. 103–105 [9 sites]). There is thus greater scope for documenting specific phases at individual sites in the former area. The western Piš-i Kūh is probably the least known region, so the absence of evidence for a phase in these valleys is less compelling than for the more intensively studied eastern valleys.

⁹ The meaning of gaps in the documented distribution must also be evaluated. Sometimes the distribution patterns point up a lack of relevant fieldwork. The topography of central western Iran structures communication between individual valleys. Thus, if sites of a given phase are documented at separate points along a route, further sites of that phase may reasonably be postulated in intervening areas, particularly when relatively little fieldwork has been done there.

specialized nomadic pastoralists. These studies of distinctive and widespread pottery assemblages indicate that pottery distributions may reflect political, economic, and perhaps ethnic aspects of ancient societies.¹⁰ Pottery distributions will be used in this study to examine broad trends in cultural and political history.

Let us proceed now to the archaeological evidence. For each phase of Gōdīn III, the regional ceramic distribution is reviewed and a cultural interpretation of the archaeological data presented. Information from historical sources is then combined with the archaeological data to build a picture of the socio-political development.

2.2 Gōdīn III: 6 (2600–2300 B.C.)

Distribution. (Figure 1 and Table 1)

Gōdīn III: 6 pottery, which is contemporary with Early Dynastic III and the Proto-imperial periods in Mesopotamia (2600–2300 B.C.), has been identified in the major southern and eastern valleys of Luristan, along routes from Susiana to the Great Khorāsān Road. Four concentrations are evident:

- 1) east of the Kūh-i Sefid, but primarily east of the Kūh-i Garīn;
- 2) the Māhidašt;
- 3) Rūmīšgān and the southern Pušt-i Kūh; and
- 4) Susa (Susiana).

The presence of Gōdīn III: 6 pottery at Gōdīn Tepe in the Kangāvar valley and at Susa in Khūzistān indicates that it will probably be found in the Burūjird valley as well, since the best route between the two passes through this valley. Unfortunately this valley is almost completely unknown archaeologically.¹¹

Gōdīn III: 6 is infrequently documented in the Alištār and Khāwa regions.¹² The scant evidence of Gōdīn III: 6 along the northern half of the route west of the Kūh-i Garīn may be due to

¹⁰ C. Kramer, *Mountains and Lowlands: Essays in the Archaeology of Greater Mesopotamia* (Bibliotheca Mesopotamica 7 [1977] 91–112); M. Nicol, *White on Black Painted Ware: A Case Study for the Relationship between Artifact Groups and Historical Events* (Doctoral Thesis, University of Pennsylvania, 1965); E. Henrickson, *Iranica Antiqua* 20 (1985) forthcoming; for Hābūr Ware see M. E. L. Mallowan, *Iraq* 4 (1937) 91 ff. and C. Hamlin, *Iran* 12 (1974) 125–153.

¹¹ E. Herzfeld published a Susa D- or Gōdīn III: 6-like painted pot which he said came from Burūjird (Iran in the Ancient East [1941] 81 and Fig. 158).

¹² This is notable since Goff illustrates pottery from 39 sites (Luristan Pl. 95–102).

less work and publication on that region. Although Gōdin III: 6 pottery has been found in the southern Pušt-i Kūh, particularly at Dār Tanhā, the frequency of Gōdin III: 6 pottery in the Pušt-i Kūh remains unclear.¹³ Gōdin III: 6 may have reached the Māhidašt from the east via the Great Khorasān Road since it is rare in the western Piš-i Kūh between Rūmišgān and the Māhidašt.¹⁴

Thus, Gōdin III: 6 sites are concentrated east of the Kūh-i Sefid, in Rūmišgān, and in the southern Pušt-i Kūh. Gōdin III: 6 is apparently absent in the western Piš-i Kūh, but there have been no large excavations except in Rūmišgān in the south. The relatively low intensity of the archaeological work (both survey and soundings) and the limited amount of pottery published might, however, accentuate or even create this pattern.

In Susiana, particularly at Susa, the monochrome painted Susa Dc-d (or Susa IVA) pottery clearly belongs to the same ceramic tradition as Gōdin III: 6.¹⁵ At present it remains unclear whether this tradition originated in the highlands or lowlands, although current evidence seems to favor the former.¹⁶ Despite the strong

¹³ L. Vanden Berghe, *Iranica Antiqua* 9 (1972), 22–33 and Pl. IX–X; data from the Pušt-i Kūh is summarized in R. Henrickson, *Godin III*, Chapter 9.20.

¹⁴ In the Māhidašt itself, Gōdin III: 6 seems to have been partially contemporary with Mārān Red Slipped ware since, at Čogha Mārān, at least one of the Godin III sherds found among the thousands of Mārān Red Slipped sherds is Gōdin III: 6 (Henrickson, *Godin III*, Fig. 169). Mārān Red Slipped ware appears to have been the dominant assemblage in the second quarter of the third millennium. East of Kermānšāh at Gakieh more Gōdin III: 6 was found, although there were also a few sherds of the Mārān assemblage (*ibid.*, Fig. 169.6). Goff illustrates pottery from nine western Piš-i Kūh sites (Luristan, Pl. 103–105). The evidence from Hūlailān is ambiguous (“Giyan IV or Susa D” [Goff, *Luristan*, Site Catalog, site 206]), and no Gōdin III material from Mortensen’s intensive survey in Hūlailān has been published (see P. Mortensen, *AMI Ergänzungband* 6 [1979] 3–8).

¹⁵ I have used the term “tradition” to refer to the phenomenon of pottery whose distinctive style of painted decoration and related shapes, found in central western Iran, underwent an unbroken stylistic evolution over the course of centuries. In each of the constituent phases various characteristic plain wares are associated with the painted wares. The ongoing stylistic development is the hallmark and unifying factor.

¹⁶ Henrickson, *Godin III*, Chapter 10.2. Before the excavations at Gōdin Tepe and the medium intensity surveys in central western Iran during the 1970s, it was suggested that the presence, in the highlands, of monochrome painted pottery clearly related to Susa D monochrome represented a lowland Elamite penetration of the region (R. Dyson, *CAH* 2 [1] [1973] 692; Goff, *Iran* 11 [1971] 146). E. Carter is not convinced that Susa has yet provided evidence for the earliest stages of the Susa D monochrome painted tradition and therefore suggested an origin in “central Luristan” (*DAFI* 11 [1980] 26).

and close relationship between Susa Dc-d and Gōdīn III: 6, regional stylistic variability is present throughout the distribution of this pottery.

Archaeological Perspective

The distribution of Gōdīn III: 6 and related Susa Dc-d pottery reflects a sphere of extensive economic interaction. In contrast to this clear evidence of strong connections between Gōdīn and central western Iran, on the one hand, and Susa, on the other, there is no evidence from the lower Diyala sites (Khafāji, Tell Asmar, and Tell Agrab) for direct contact with the highlands at this time.¹⁷

Historical Perspective

The area of concentration of Gōdīn III: 6 pottery east of the Kūh-i Sefid does not figure identifiably in the lowland history of its time. Elamite history during this period is little known, and the historical geography of the highlands is ill-defined in our Mesopotamian historical sources.¹⁸ Aside from tales preserved only in late copies and of dubious historical worth, such as “Enmerkar and the Lord of Aratta”, the highlands are seldom mentioned. Epigraphic sources thus lend little aid to interpretation.

2.3 Gōdīn III: 5 (2300–2100 B.C.)

Distribution. (Figure 2 and Table 2)

Gōdīn III: 5 pottery has a more continuous distribution than did Gōdīn III: 6. Gōdīn III: 5 is found primarily in the northern half of central western Iran, along the High Road and the northern portions of the north-south routes. Only the Rūmīšgan valley,

¹⁷ Henrickson, *Godin III*, Chapter 9. Cf. P. Delougaz, OIP 63 (1952). Eannatum of Lagaš claims to have conquered “Elam”, but the scope and duration of this ‘conquest’ are unclear. The (‘Susa D’) monochrome pottery found at Lagaš (al-Hiba) associated with sealings of Enannatum, Eannatum, and Lummatur might reflect this event (D. Hansen, *Artibus Asiae* 35 [1973] 68–69 and Figs. 14–15; Cameron, *Early Iran* [1936] 24–25).

¹⁸ Analysis of the historical geography of the highlands would be a large task, beyond the scope of the current study (cf. *Rép. géogr.* 1 [1977] as source for ancient place names).

isolated at the south, breaks this pattern, and it is the only southern valley in which large scale excavations have taken place. The nature of the cultural connections between Rūmišgān and valleys to the north has yet to be documented archaeologically. The Pušt-i Kūh has yielded no Gōdin III: 5 pottery. The apparent concentration of sites in the northern regions may be a result of more research there.

Within the highlands, Gōdin III: 5 pottery is slightly more widespread and common throughout its distribution than was that of the previous phase. Nonetheless, most known sites are still found east of the Kūh-i Sefid. The pottery is quite uniform stylistically throughout its known distribution.

Archaeological Interpretation

The stylistic homogeneity of the pottery suggests considerable interaction among the highland valleys. The distribution also seems to indicate a slight withdrawal northward within the highlands. Earlier connections with the lowlands, as documented by pottery parallels, are essentially severed. Only a few sherds of Gōdin III: 5 style pottery are found at Susa.¹⁹

Historical Perspective

The highland historical geography of the Akkadian and immediately post-Akkadian period is obscure, and any analysis of Akkadian campaigns in the highlands is thus problematic.²⁰ For this discussion, it suffices to note that the Akkadian kings spent considerable military effort on highland problems and may have controlled the outer portion of the highlands.²¹ This may be reflected by the apparent predominance of Mesopotamian material in Pušt-i Kūh graves of this period and the virtual absence of Gōdin III: 5 pottery.²²

¹⁹ Henrickson, *Godin III*, Chapter 9.22 and Table 33.

²⁰ 'Marḥaši' is a pivotal highland point, long thought to be located in southern Luristan, but Steinkeller has recently argued strongly that it lay far to the east, beyond Fars (ZA 72 [1982] 237 ff.).

²¹ C. Gadd, CAH 1 (2) (1971) 93–144.

²² Although Gutium in the Sargonic period is often placed in central western Iran (e.g., Rép., géogr. 2 [1974]), the earliest contemporary sources first attest Gutium in the middle Euphrates area. The tradition of a trans-Tigris Gutium begins in the

Susa and the Susiana lowlands were conquered and held by the Akkadian dynasty. This lowland political isolation from the highlands is mirrored in the ceramic assemblage from Susa, where there are essentially no parallels to Gōdīn III: 5. The material culture of Susa becomes increasingly Mesopotamian in character.²³

In conclusion, in contrast to the ceramic evidence, the historical records show that the highlands had abundant contact, often military, with the lowlands, although where the settlements, polities, and regions mentioned in the texts lay is uncertain. The homogeneity of style within the highlands suggests increased interaction among valleys there. The overall distribution exhibits an apparent withdrawal northward, presumably in response to Akkadian military and political pressure.

2.4 Gōdīn III: 4 (2100–1900 B.C.)

Distribution. (Figure 3 and Table 3)

The recognized distribution of Gōdīn III: 4 pottery is somewhat more restricted and sparser than that of the previous phase. All Gōdīn III: 4 pottery is found in the northern valleys, again with the notable exception of Rūmišgān. None is found in the lowlands (Susiana). This apparent slight contraction in distribution may be deceptive and due to two factors. First, the pottery of this phase is notably diverse in both style and shape. While the assemblage from Gōdīn Tepe encompasses a wealth of diversity, as does that of Tepe Giyan, there are considerable stylistic differences between these two sites.²⁴ Second, the assemblage represents a stylistic transition. Both Gōdīn III: 5 and III: 2 have distinct and coherent styles. Gōdīn III: 4, however, contains elements of both.²⁵

Old Babylonian period (W. W. Hallo, *RIA* III [1971] 719). In addition, I do not know of any archaeological evidence, particularly Gōdīn III: 5–4 pottery, from Mesopotamia to suggest any connection with central western Iran at this time.

²³ Carter, *DAFI* 11 (1980) 11, 21–26, 31; Cameron, *Early Iran* 26–42; Hinz, *CAH* 1 (2) (1971) 644–680; P. Amiet, *Akkadica* 15 (1979) 16–17 and *Antiquity* 53 (1979) 201–202.

²⁴ Even at Gōdīn, the painted assemblage from the Op. EEE grave (Henrickson, *Godin III*, Fig. 132–133) is recognizably different stylistically from that of the Deep Sounding (cf. *ibid.*, Figs. 110–121 and Chapter 7.4).

²⁵ Henrickson, *Godin III*, Chapter 7.4–6.

Archaeological Interpretation

The development of distinctive and sometimes elaborate local sub-styles, notably in the Kangāvar and Nehāvand valleys, may contribute to an appearance of retrenchment. Elsewhere sub-styles appear to have been simpler (e.g., Rūmišgān) and thus more difficult to recognize as contemporary with the Gōdin III: 4 sub-style of Kangāvar and Nehāvand. The lack of a stratified sequence for this time-range west of the Kūh-i Sefid aggravates this problem.

The appearance of one localized sub-style suggests either that similar developments occurred elsewhere, or this one region was differentiated from the rest. Local sub-styles may mark the intensification of ethnic differentiation or the development of local elite groups. Variations in style of artifacts, such as pottery or clothing, may be used to differentiate either multiple ethnic groups living in the same region or segments within a society. In the latter case the emergence of an elite group within the society may be inferred.²⁶

Historical Perspective

Gōdin III: 4 is essentially contemporary with the Ur III and early Isin-Larsa periods. From the reign of Šulgi until that of Ibbi-Sin, Susa and lowland Elam were a province of the Ur III state.²⁷ 'Messenger texts', however, document peaceful contact with highland Iran from the reign of Šulgi to that of Ibbi-Sin, as a stream of royal agents was sent to the highlands.²⁸ In addition, the royal correspondence of Ur and year-names document sustained military concern with, and frequent campaigns to, the north and northeast – the Zagros highlands of central western Iran.²⁹

²⁶ M. Wobst, University of Michigan Museum of Anthropology Anthropological Papers 61 (1977) 317 ff.; I. Hodder, *American Antiquity* 44 (1979) 446 ff., and *Symbols in Action: Ethnoarchaeological Studies of Material Culture* (Cambridge, 1982); S. Pollock, *Journal of Anthropological Archaeology* 2 (1983) 354 ff. and *The Symbolism of Prestige: An Archaeological Example from the Royal Cemetery of Ur* (Doctoral Thesis, University of Michigan, 1983).

²⁷ Cameron, *Early Iran* 43–59; Hallo, *JNES* 15 (1956) 220 ff.; Hinz, *CAH* 1 (2) (1971) 654–659; P. Michalowski, *ZA* 68 (1978) 34 ff.

²⁸ R. McNeil, *The 'Messenger Texts' of the Third Ur Dynasty* (Doctoral Thesis, University of Pennsylvania, 1970) 23–38; T. Jones/J. Snyder, *Sumerian Economic Texts from the Third Ur Dynasty* (1961) 280–310.

²⁹ P. Michalowski, *The Royal Correspondence of Ur* (Doctoral Thesis, Yale University, 1976) (hereafter Michalowski, *Correspondence*); A. Ungnad, *RLA* II (1938) 136–147.

The Ur III state presumably tried to maintain semi-independent polities as protective buffers on its borders. Both military campaigns and diplomatic efforts were undertaken in attempts to consolidate this frontier.³⁰ The military policy of the Ur III state was "defensive and oriented towards Iran".³¹ Defenses were concentrated in the area of the middle Diyala River and at Der.³² Susiana may have been incorporated into the Ur III state as a province to continue this line of defense to the south. In this way the Mesopotamian gateways to the highland routes were protected, and highland access to the lowlands restricted. Karkar, probably located in the Māhidašt valley system, was a key point on the Great Khorasān Road, and was under constant attack during the final years of Šulgi's reign.³³ The Ur III year-names further document the concentration on central western Iran with campaigns against Sabum, Zabšali, Šimaški, and perhaps Marḥaši.³⁴

It is at this time that Šimaški assumes a prominent role in Elamite history. This secondary state³⁵ may have coalesced in response to the military and political pressures exerted by Ur.³⁶ Stolper has proposed a series of steps in the formation of the state of Šimaški:

The authors of the OB list of Šimaškian rulers recognized leaders of discrete highland principalities as the political and historical predecessors of a dynasty which eventually emerged from interregional ties. Šu-sin's war took place at a time when such ties were forming. The war was not an isolated foray, but an escalation; Ur had been campaigning on its eastern and northeastern marches almost incessantly since late in the reign of Šulgi. Conflict stiffened local opposition and created communities of interest among Ur's adversaries.

³⁰ Michalowski, Correspondence 77–94 and ZA 68 (1978) 34 ff.

³¹ Michalowski, Correspondence 116.

³² Ibid. 101–116.

³³ Michalowski, Correspondence 116–117; L. Levine, *Iran* 12 (1974) 116–117.

³⁴ P. Steinkeller, ZA 72 (1982) 237 ff.; *Rép. géogr.* 2 (1974).

³⁵ When a state impinges forcefully (politically or militarily) on an adjacent region which has lesser degree of political organization, the reaction of the latter region may be increased complexity of political organization, or the formation of a 'secondary state' (M. Fried, *The Evolution of Political Society* [1967] 227–242, especially 240–242; R. Cohen, in: (ed.) R. Cohen/ E. R. Service, *Origins of the State* [1978] 141–160; B. Price, in: *ibid.* 161–186).

³⁶ M. Stolper, ZA 72 (1982) 49–54, 58; see S. Brown, *Kinship to Kingship: Archaeological and Historical Studies in the Neo-Assyrian Zagros* (Doctoral Thesis, University of Toronto, 1979) for a similar proposal concerning the rise of the Median state in the first millennium B.C.

Loose political affiliations perhaps antedated the campaign. Šu-Sin's war stimulated or accelerated political or military liaisons among the several regions. Within thirty years . . . the ties were secure; a concerted highland polity was able to take Susa and carry the war to Ur.³⁷

Whatever the external pressure, such a development was not inexorable. Stolper suggests two non-exclusive mechanisms which might have facilitated such a process.³⁸ First, the Ur III 'messenger texts' document movement not only back and forth between the Ur III state and surrounding areas, but also along the periphery. Such contact among polities at the edge of Ur's influence could have facilitated the formation of highland alliances. Second, just as the Ur III kings used dynastic marriages in an attempt to consolidate their eastern border, highland rulers could have contracted similar marriages among themselves, leading to a geographically widespread socio-political network with considerable regional autonomy.³⁹ These ties were probably further strengthened with the success of allied military action against Ur, and a dynastic line emerged.

Thus the archaeological and historical data may be combined into a coherent picture. The sustained Ur III conflict with highland polities may help to account for the paucity of documented finds of Gōdin III: 4 pottery in southern valleys and the western Piš-i Kūh, but relatively little archaeological work beyond reconnaissance has been done there. Although the dynasty of Šimaški asserted its authority over several previously (semi-)autonomous polities in a

³⁷ Stolper, ZA 72, 51.

³⁸ Ibid., 52–53.

³⁹ C. Goff describes this type of kinship situation in modern day southern Luristan: ". . . the whole area [from Khorramabad to Susiana] appears to be governed by a single family. My host Agha Naseri, the . . . governor of Pol-i Dokhtar, was brother to the *katkhoda* of Washiyan . . . a second brother or cousin ruled from Qal'eh Nasir. My Washiyan guide could name relatives from Pol-i Dokhtar to Khorramabad and owned land in both areas. If one can postulate similar conditions in prehistoric times this would mean that despite the physical difficulties of travelling through the area, the ruler of Susa, or any town on the Khuzistan plain, would only have to win over the following of a single "marcher lord" to have his routes in to the Pish-i Kuh guaranteed. Moreover he could easily apply pressure by controlling the winter grazing grounds. Thus in normal times, the south of Luristan would seem to have been part of the Elamite confederacy" (Goff, Iran 9 [1971] 133).

In the case of Šimaški the highland-lowland balance of power would have been reversed.

transition to a large-scale regional state, this new power had yet to be consolidated. Thus local socio-political groups would tend to attempt to maintain separate ethnic or cultural identities, partially through production of distinctive items of material culture. This may be reflected archaeologically in the growth of local ceramic sub-styles. In the following Gōdīn III: 2 phase the culmination of socio-political integration is evident.

2.5 Gōdīn III: 2 (1900–1600 B.C.)⁴⁰

Distribution. (Figure 4 and Table 4)

Gōdīn III: 2 pottery is nearly ubiquitous throughout central western Iran. It is found in all major and most minor valleys and is more common than pottery of any other phase.⁴¹ In addition, Gōdīn III: 2 pottery is remarkably homogeneous in style throughout its distribution, although there is some interregional variability. None, however, is known from the Pušt-i Kūh.

Archaeological Interpretation

Although some variability is found, the marked stylistic homogeneity throughout the distribution suggests an unprecedented degree of interregional interaction within central western Iran. Gross

⁴⁰ See note 5.

⁴¹ Henrickson, *Godin III*, Chapter 9. This distribution should, however, be interpreted with caution. The number of settlements relative to earlier phases may be disproportionately large due to a subsequent shift in settlement patterns. All of the excavated sites yielding Godin III material were abandoned by somewhat after the middle of the second millennium, not to be re-occupied for some time, if ever. Indeed the latest identifiable Gōdīn III occupation at all sites, except Gōdīn Tepe, is Gōdīn III: 2; Post-III: 2 pottery (1600–1400 B.C.) has been recovered through excavation only from graves. Thus Gōdīn III: 2 is the last identifiable Gōdīn III cultural phase known to yield deep archaeological deposits from ruined architecture. These Gōdīn III: 2 occupations might tend to mask, to some degree, earlier levels. They would also lie closer to the surface of the mounds, particularly given the shift in settlement patterns in the early Iron Age (suggested by R. H. Dyson, personal communication). There is no documented continuity of occupation at any site in central western Iran from Gōdīn III: 2 into the Iron Age. This would result in its being proportionately over-represented in survey due to its greater exposure. Although this may be a factor in the apparent growth of population, there is little reason to doubt that there was some real increase in area of distribution. Given the general lack of detailed regional pottery data, it is difficult to decide the question of density and frequency of sites.

survey results suggest that in some larger valleys the number of smaller sites declined as central sites attained considerable size.⁴² No grave or site in the Pušt-i Kūh has yielded Gōdin III: 2 pottery, and the reuse of some third millennium B.C. communal tombs in the Pušt-i Kūh during the Old Babylonian period is marked by Mesopotamian rather than Gōdin III: 2 pottery.⁴³ This suggests that the Pušt-i Kūh was a border zone under lowland influence or control.

While the ceramic evidence indicates considerable integration within central western Iran, ceramic links to other regions are sparse but suggestive, especially parallels to the pottery assemblage at Susa. Both grey and buff wares provide parallels, but the grey wares are the most important link for two reasons. First, although the grey wares of Gōdin Tepe and Susa are not identical, they are similar in manufacture, general appearance, and shape. Second, this type of grey ware has parallels only in the Elamite (Susiana) lowlands.⁴⁴ Several sherds of Isin-Larsa incised grey ware are found at Gōdin,⁴⁵ but they are distinct from the Gōdin III: 2 grey wares and are clearly imports. Aside from *istakhans*,⁴⁶ there are no shape parallels to Mesopotamian forms. Thus the parallels, and therefore the assumed cultural connections, are almost entirely with lowland Elam.

Historical Perspective

The Šīmaški state had coalesced by 2000 B.C. Under its control were Šīmaški proper, Anšan (in Fars), the Su-lands (uncertain location), and Khūzistān. The *sukkalmahs* replaced the Šīmaški dynasty, with the first *sukkalmah* taking control of Susa by 1900 B.C. Judging from the titulary of the rulers, however, Šīmaški continued as an important component of the state.⁴⁷

Central western Iran exhibits the greatest uniformity and widest distribution of Gōdin III ceramics during the Gōdin III: 2 phase.

⁴² Goff, Iran 11 (1971) 150.

⁴³ Henrickson, Godin III, Chapter 9.20. See, for example, the graves at Kalleh Nisar (L. Vanden Berghe, Bulletin of the Asia Institute of Pahlavi University 2 [1973] 27).

⁴⁴ Henrickson, Godin III, Chapter 7.4 and 7.6.

⁴⁵ Ibid., Chapters 7.4, 7.6, 8.4, and 8.6; Fig. 131.1–3, 151.1.

⁴⁶ Ibid., Chapters 7.6–7 and 8.6–7; Fig. 155.16, 157.5–6, 162.

⁴⁷ Stolper, ZA 72 (1982) 49–56.



This in turn suggests the achievement of an unprecedented degree of regional integration. Further, it is accompanied by clear links to lowland Elam. This development corresponds to the prominence and role of the Šimaški polity in historical sources for this period. Some regional variability in pottery style is expected, given that the state seems to have been a confederation. The general homogeneity, marked expansion of distribution, and likely increase in numbers (and sizes?) of sites would be appropriate to the unification of the highlands in a secondary state (see Tables 4–5 and Figure 4).

3. Conclusions

In this study changing distributions of Gōdīn III pottery have been used to trace the regional pattern of development from 2600–1600 B.C. These reflect the gradual formation of a regional secondary state by the early second millennium B.C. The textual sources indicate that a state, Šimaški, probably lay north or northeast of Khūzistān or Fars. This state had developed from a network of alliances formed in resistance to Akkadian and Ur III military and political pressure in the late third millennium. The lack of definitive textual data does not permit positive identification of the archaeological phenomenon as Šimaški. Nonetheless, the archaeological and historical developments are both parallel and contemporary, and the location is acceptable. Thus the archaeological and historical evidence taken together indicates that Šimaški lay in central western Iran.

Table 1. Sites with Gōdin III: 6 Pottery in Central Western Iran.*

East of the Kūh-i Garīn	Excavated	Survey Data
Kangāvar	1	X
Assadābād		
Šaḥneh		
Hamadān		
Malāyer		X
Nehāvand		X
Burūjird		
Eastern Piš-i Kūh		
Harsīn/Delfan/Khāwa	(2)	1 (+2)
Alištar	(1)	X
Khorramābād	(1)	(X)
Western Piš-i Kūh		
Māhidašt	1	X
Šāhābād		
Hūlailān	(X)	
Tarhān		
Kūh-i Dašt		
Rūmišgān	4	X
Saimarreh		
Pušt-i Kūh	X	X
Khūzistān		
Deh Lūrān		
Susa and Susiana	1	X

* Tables 1–4 are based on published illustrated pottery (documentation in Henrickson, *Godin III*, Tables 17–35).

X . . . present;

() . . . uncertain attribution;

[] . . . limited parallels.

Table 2. Sites with Gōdin III: 5 Pottery in Central Western Iran.

East of the Kūh-i Garin	Excavated	Survey Data
Kangāvar	1	X
Assadābād		
Šaḥneh		
Hamadān		
Malāyer		X
Nehāvand	1	X
Burūjird		
Eastern Piš-i Kūh		
Harsin/Delfan/Khāwa	3 (+1)	8 (+3)
Alištar	3 (+1)	X
Khorramābād		
Western Piš-i Kūh		
Māhidašt		X
Šāhābād		
Hūlailān		2
Tarhān		
Kūh-i Dašt		
Rūmišgān	3	X
Saimarreh		
Pušt-i Kūh	(X)	
Khūzistān		
Deh Lūrān		
Susa and Susiana	(1)	(X)

Table 3. Sites with Gōdin III: 4 Pottery in Central Western Iran.

East of the Kūh-i Garīn	Excavated	Survey Data
Kangāvar	1	X
Assadābād		
Šahneh		
Hamadān		
Malāyer		X
Nehāvand	1	X
Burūjird		
Eastern Piš-i Kūh		
Harsīn/Delfan/Khāwa	3 (+1)	6 (+1)
Alištar	1	
Khorramābād		
Western Piš-i Kūh		
Māhīdašt		X
Šāhābād		
Hūlailān		
Tarhān		
Kūh-i Dašt	1	X
Rūmišgān	1	X
Saimarreh		
Pušt-i Kūh		
Khūzistān		
Deh Lūrān		
Susa and Susiana		

Table 4. Sites with Gōdīn III: 2 Pottery in Central Western Iran.

East of the Kūh-i Garīn	Excavated	Survey Data
Kangāvar	1	X
Assadābād	1	X
Šaḥneh		X
Hamadān		
Malāyer		X
Nehāvand	1	X
Burūjird		
Eastern Piš-i Kūh		
Harsīn/Delfan/Khāwa	5	20
Alīštar	1	3-4
Khorramābād		X
Western Piš-i Kūh		
Māhīdašt		X
Šāhābād		
Hūlailān	3	2
Tarhān		1
Kūh-i Dašt	1	1
Rūmišgān	2	X
Saimarreh	1	X
Pušt-i Kūh		
Khūzistān		
Deh Lūrān		
Susa and Susiana	[1]	

Table 5. Gross Distribution of Gōdīn III Phases in Central Western Iran.

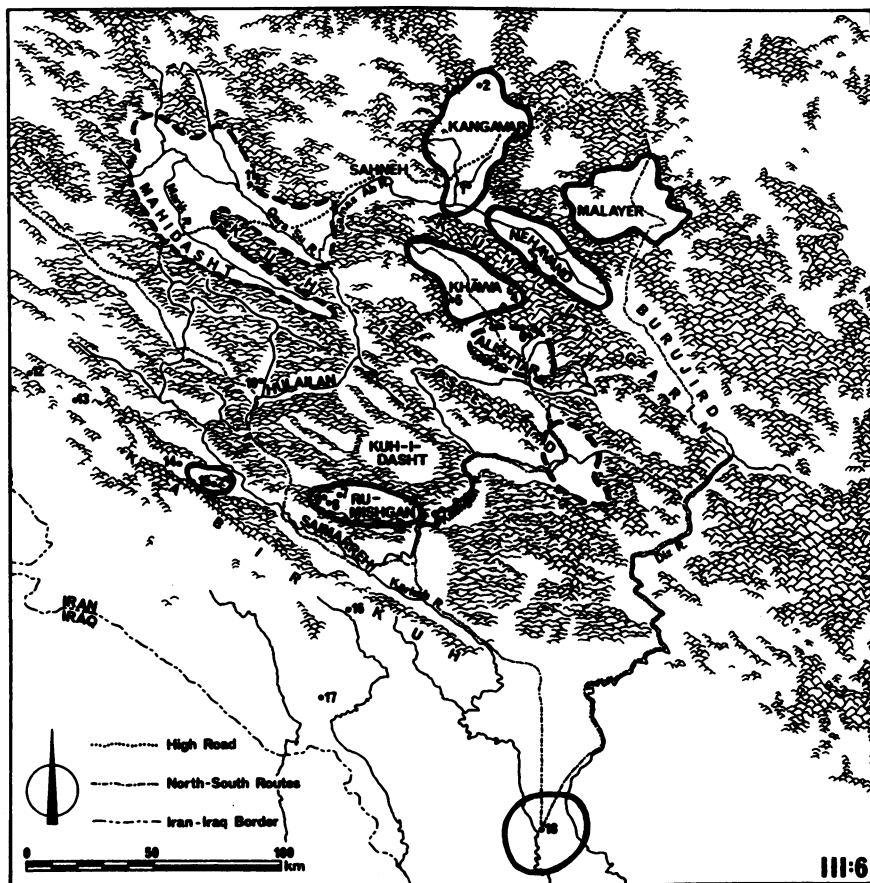
Godin III Level	East of Kūh-i Garin	Eastern Piš-i Kūh	Western Piš-i Kūh	Māhidašt	Pušt-i Kūh	Susa
III: 2	3*	40	13	X		(Different Assemblage; Limited Parallels.)
III: 4	2*	10	3	X		
III: 5	2*	16	4	X		X
III: 6	4*	3	5	X	X	X

Numbers indicate numbers of sites identified.

* No survey data by phase; figures primarily based on excavated sites.

X = present; no breakdown by phase is possible.

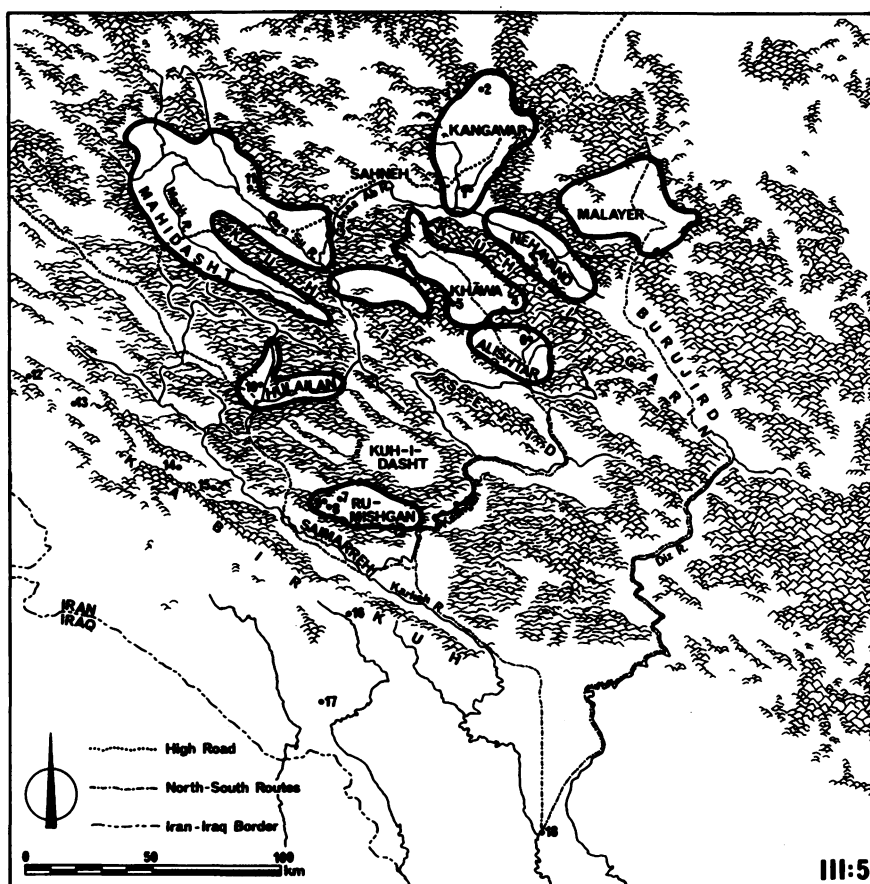
Nota bene: Site counts in this table are based both on published drawings and verbal attribution (e.g. "Gīyan III") of unillustrated pottery; numbers may be larger than in Tables 1-4.



SITES IN CENTRAL WESTERN IRAN ca. 2600 - 1500 B.C.				
1. GODIN TEPE	2. BAD KHOREH	3. TEPE GIYAN	4. TEPE JAMSHIDI	5. BABA JAN
6. GIRAIRAN	7. KAMTARLAN	8. CHIGHA SABZ	9. MIRVALI	10. TEPE GURAN
11. CHOCHA MARAN	12. KALLEH NISAR	13. BANI SURMAH	14. MIR KHAIR	15. DAR TANHA
16. QABR NAHI	17. TEPE ALIABAD	18. SUSA		

Figure 1. Godin III: 6 Pottery Distribution.

(Solid outline = well-documented presence;
dashed outline = presence poorly documented or uncertain)

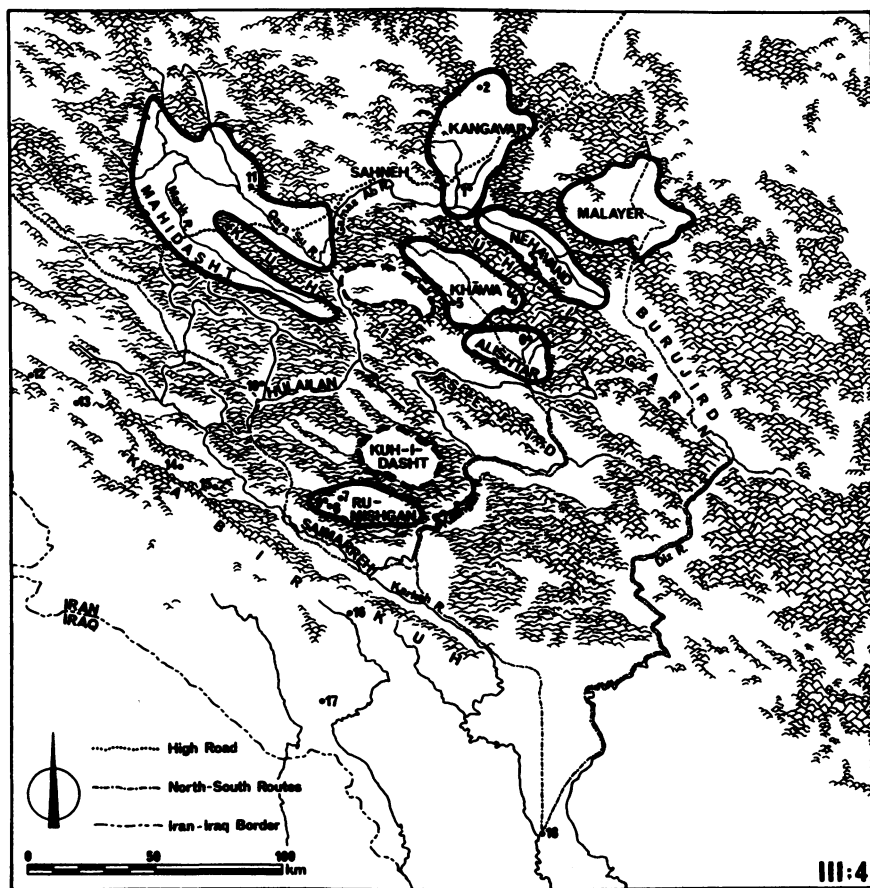


SITES IN CENTRAL WESTERN IRAN ca. 2600 - 1500 B.C.

- | | | | | |
|------------------|------------------|-----------------|------------------|----------------|
| 1. GODIN TEPE | 2. BAD KHOREH | 3. TEPE GYAN | 4. TEPE JAMSHIDI | 5. BABA JAN |
| 6. GIRAIRAN | 7. KAMTARLAN | 8. CHIGHA SABZ | 9. MIRVALI | 10. TEPE GURAN |
| 11. CHOGHA MARAN | 12. KALLEH NISAR | 13. BANI SURMAH | 14. MIR KHAIR | 15. DAR TANHA |
| 16. QABR NAHI | 17. TEPE ALIABAD | 18. SUSA | | |

Figure 2. Godin III: 5 Pottery Distribution.

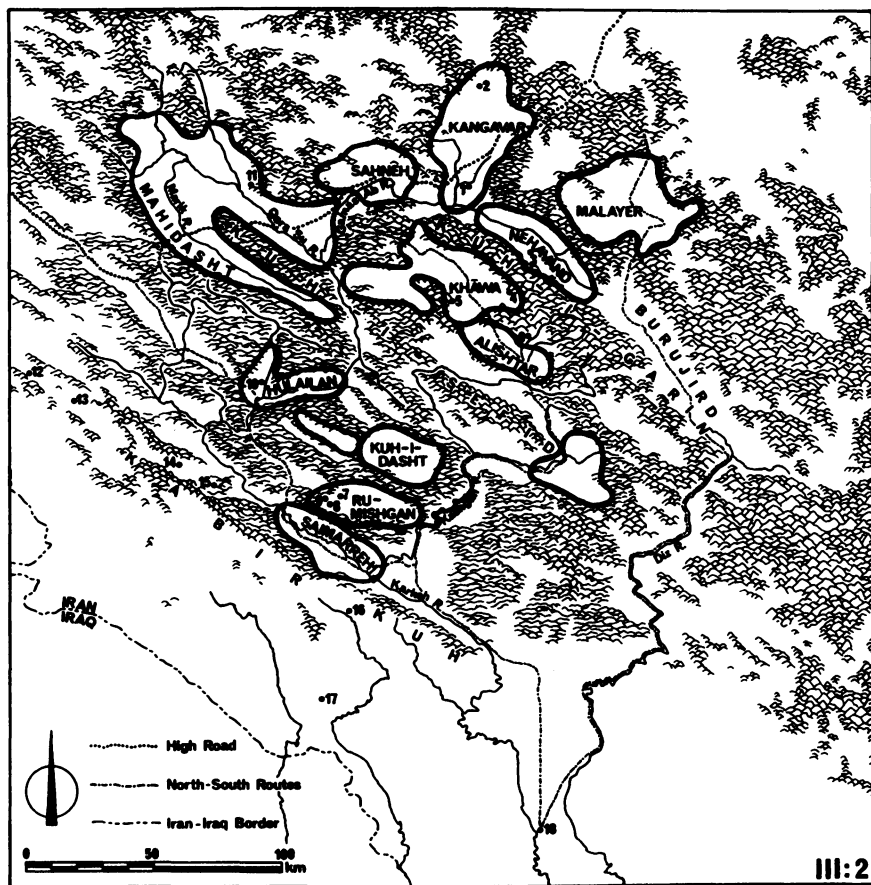
(Solid outline = well-documented presence)



SITES IN CENTRAL WESTERN IRAN ca. 2600 - 1500 B.C.				
1. GODIN TEPE	2. BAD KHOREH	3. TEPE GIYAN	4. TEPE JAMSHIDI	5. BABA JAN
6. GIRAIRAN	7. KANTARLAN	8. CHOGHA SABZ	9. MIRYALI	10. TEPE GURAN
11. CHOGHA MARAN	12. KALLEH NISAR	13. BANI SURMAH	14. MIR KHAIR	15. DAR TANHA
16. QABR NAHI	17. TEPE ALIABAD	18. SUSA		

Figure 3. Godin III: 4 Pottery Distribution.

(Solid outline = well-documented presence;
dashed outline = presence poorly documented or uncertain)



SITES IN CENTRAL WESTERN IRAN ca. 2600 - 1500 B.C.

- | | | | | |
|------------------|------------------|-----------------|------------------|----------------|
| 1. GODIN TEPE | 2. BAD KHOREH | 3. TEPE GIYAN | 4. TEPE JAMSHIDI | 5. BABA JAN |
| 6. GIRAIRAN | 7. KAMTARLAN | 8. CHOGHA SABZ | 9. MIRVALI | 10. TEPE GURAN |
| 11. CHOGHA MARAN | 12. KALLEH NISAR | 13. BANI SURMAH | 14. MIR KHAIR | 15. DAR TANHA |
| 16. QABR NAHI | 17. TEPE ALIABAD | 18. SUSA | | |

Figure 4. Godin III: 2 Pottery Distribution.

(Solid outline = well-documented presence)